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[Review of] Musopen

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Musopen, by Aaron Dunn et al.<http://musopen.org/>

[Visited Dec'13] Dunn began this nonprofit website as a college student to "[focus] on improving access and exposure to music by creating free resources and educational materials." *Musopen* offers copyright-free classical recordings, sheet music, and (not yet available) textbooks. "Free" must be qualified, however. For unlimited high-quality audio downloads, one must become a member (\$55/year); benefactors (\$20/month) receive HD downloads and may request additions of musical works to the collection. Lite (free) registration allows free access to five downloads a day in standard-quality audio (MP3). Material is supplied via uploads of public domain material by both *Musopen* and registrants. In addition, a Kickstarter campaign funded the recording of a copyright-free set of major pieces; a new campaign will make available Chopin's complete works. Browsable access to the musical recordings includes some 160 composer listings (e.g., Beethoven, Bach, Bartok, Mozart, and Satie), performers (e.g., US military bands), instruments (e.g., piano, choir), periods (e.g., medieval, Renaissance), and forms (e.g., overture, symphony).

A search box provides access to listings and titles. Sound file quality varies from the free MP3 format to FLAC, Apple Lossless, and HD quality (for benefactors). Sheet music PDFs are accessible through the same browse/search methods. Music recording entries include brief composer biographies and a listing of works labeled by form, instrument, period, performer, and, in many cases, ratings. Arrow links lead to streaming recordings, download access, and (sometimes) brief commentary. Much larger collections are available, e.g., *Petrucci Music Library* (CH, Nov'10, 48-1212) has 255,700-plus scores and 26,000-plus recordings. Subscribers to Alexander Street's *Classical Music Library* (CH, Aug'06, 43Sup-0164) can listen to a massive collection of recordings. *Musopen's* unique value is the availability of quality sound recordings that may be freely incorporated into projects without copyright clearance issues. **Summing Up:** Recommended. Lower-division undergraduates and above; general audience.

--R. A. Aken, University of Kentucky

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Choice November 2010 48:48-1212; doi:10.5860/CHOICE.48-1212

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